

The Record

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'Passion' destined to make movie history

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — After months of speculation and controversy surrounding Mel Gibson's movie *The Passion of The Christ*, the film opened as a blockbuster Feb. 25 and has crossed over the \$100 million ticket sales threshold that will confirm its place in movie history.

Only *Spiderman* and *The Matrix Reloaded* drew in more moviegoers in the first week of release, and industry observers are predicting that *The Passion of the Christ* could gross as much as \$350 million.

However, more significant than the ticket sales is the number of changed lives that emerged on the first day alone from the 3,000-plus theaters where the movie premiered.

Jean Gordon, religion reporter for *The Clarion-Ledger* newspaper in Jackson, talked with a group of young people from Pinelake Church, Brandon, who saw the movie on opening night.

"No matter how macho you are, you're going to cry," said 14-year-old Darren Ross.

"I'll never read the Bible again without having memories of this," Virginia Wood of Madison told Gordon.

In Maryland, 13-year-old Michael McKoy said the movie about the last 12 hours of Jesus' life has caused him to reconsider his daily behavior. "There are some days when I wake up in the morning, when I feel like I do not have the time to pray, to read the Word of God," McKoy said. "While I have read the Gospel accounts of the passion, seeing it portrayed on the big screen, seeing the length that Jesus was willing to go to die for me, makes it impossible for me to wake up in the morning and feel like I don't have time to read the Word and to pray."

In Dallas, 27-year-old Lauren Reagin found the film to be emotional and difficult to watch. She said knowing that at any time during the excruciating beating Jesus had the power to say it was enough and quit was a powerful testimony that will have an impact on her outlook for the future. "It wasn't just being nailed to the cross, it was all of it — the beating," she said. "I just can't imagine Him doing that. As a believer, I get a little persecution from somebody and want to quit."

Scott Barkley of Canton, Ga., took note of the audience reaction as he watched the film. "The resurrection scene seemed to usher in a holy moment of sorts for the crowd," he recounted. "Some cheered. Some clapped. Most sat in stunned silence. This silence could have been from the shock of having seen what they had read about since the early days of VBS (Vacation Bible School)."

He said as the closing credits rolled, a shout or two of "Thank you, Jesus!" came from the crowd as others discussed what they had just seen and still others gave invitations to accept Jesus. "It was obvious that this film had a profound effect on the crowd," Barkley said. "One person commented they had never been punched in the face and gut by a movie until then."

At the Regal Beaches theater in Jacksonville, Fla., the first showing of *The*



POWERFUL SCENE — Jesus, as portrayed by actor James Caviezel, carries the cross after being flogged by Roman guards in Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. As the movie surpasses \$100 million in ticket sales in less than a week since its release, Southern Baptist leaders have endorsed the film as a powerful evangelistic tool. (Photo courtesy of Icon Distribution Inc.)

Passion at noon was nearly sold out, and a dozen more showings were planned. The theater's lights quickly dimmed as the Icon Productions logo flashed on the screen. In just moments, without any previews to distract the audience, the scene of Jesus praying in the garden captured the attention of those watching. Soon the sound of soft sobbing competed with the sound of people munching popcorn. Some brought tissues to wipe away tears, and some gasped audibly as Jesus was lashed.



ON LOCATION — Reviewer Holly McClure (right) visits with actor/director Mel Gibson on the set in Rome where he filmed *The Passion* focusing primarily on the hours leading up to Christ's crucifixion. (BP photo courtesy of Holly McClure)

Les Fauth, one of the viewers at Regal Beaches, said the violence leading up to the crucifixion served as an important reminder that Jesus did not simply lay down his life. "It didn't spare you any pain," he said. "I thought they'd never stop beating Him. I don't think an average person would have held up. He would have expired, but Jesus is the Son of God and He did this for everybody's sins, so it had to be."

Dwight McKissic of Cornerstone Church in Arlington, Texas, told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram the violence in the film was not unnecessary because it was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy that the Messiah's blood would be spilled. "I see the blood as absolutely necessary," he said. "Without blood, it's like every other religion."

Sam Porter, men's ministry and missions specialist for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, said he made a point to observe the reactions of those around him in the theater. "I think the people that it is gripping more than anyone else are those that maybe have conviction in their heart but have never done anything with that in a commitment to Jesus Christ," he said. "To me that's one of the most important things that this movie can do is to maybe bring those people to a full understanding of the price Jesus paid for their sin."

Mike Hasha, pastor of First Church in Jacksonville Beach, Fla., said he thinks the graphic portrayal of the brutality will speak in a special way to the young generation of Reality TV viewers, those ages 17-30. "Their education and experience with life, with the Internet, with cable TV is much more visual now than it's ever been in history."

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

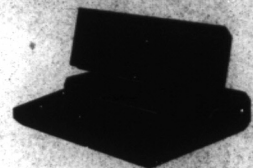
Directions

Just for the Record

Sunday School Lessons

Baptist Children's Village

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How could this happen?

I just can't believe it!" said the movie mogul to the other Hollywood big shots assembled in his office for the crisis meeting. "I thought Mel Gibson was one of us. Didn't you think so, too? Why, we feted him and put him on a pedestal and gave him every possible award. We made him! Then he goes out without our permission and creates this, uh, what's the name? Oh, yeah, *The Passion of the Christ* movie. How could he do this to us?"

"I know what you mean," said the studio owner. "He's definitely off the plantation. What could Mel have been thinking? He was brought up through the system; he has to understand how it works. Surely after all these years in the business, Mel knows we've given ourselves the exclusive right to determine the moral standards for this country. He acts as if he doesn't comprehend that we decide whether a movie gets made or not."

"That's the part that really gets me," said the producer, "and besides that, he didn't ask us for one penny to finance the movie — like we would have given it to him anyway. He went out on a limb and spent \$50 million of his own money for production and promotion. He's got some nerve!"

"He even found an independent company to take the movie the final step into theaters," said the big-time movie distributor. "He went around us! How are we supposed to control what Americans see in movies if we can't even keep a religious movie like this one out of theaters?" he asked his soulmates.

"I don't get it," said the movie critic, "the people aren't listening to us. This movie even set the all-time record for opening on more screens than any other movie ever made. We've panned it viciously and used every conceivable personal slur against Mel — 60 Minutes' Andy Rooney even called Mel a 'wacko' on national television — and yet people flocked by the hundreds of thousands to see it on opening night. Don't all those unwashed cretins out there in flyover coun-

try understand that we're the ones who tell them what they can watch?"

"Get a load of the numbers this flick is pulling down," said the producer. "\$172 million in five days. Five days! The *Passion of the Christ* actually beat out one of the *Star Wars* movies in the five-day numbers. The sky's the limit when this movie hits DVD. Go figure."

"Actually, it's not that hard to understand," said the studio chaplain. "Americans have always had a hunger for stories that depict people as noble and moral, even self-sacrificing. Look at the success of the *Star Wars* movies, the main characters of which exhibit unshakable courage, character, and devotion to duty and friends. Doesn't that tell you anything? Nary a curse word in those movies, and no sex at all. Yet on the 20th anniversary re-release of *A New Hope*, the first *Star Wars* episode, people lined

up around the block for hours to get a ticket.

"The same goes for the *Lord of the Rings* series. The *Return of the King* installment just won 11 Academy Awards. Together the three films are set to gross billions of dollars in revenue over the next several years. Yet there wasn't a hint of nudity or perverse behavior among the heroes, just courage, character, and devotion to friends and duty. Is any of this starting to sound familiar?"

The chaplain's comments were met with immediate howls of laughter. "What century are you from?" the studio owner asked derisively. "You're positively quaint. That kind of stuff went out with virginity and 'Love thy neighbor.' In our world,

"I DIDN'T SEE ANY OF THOSE HANNIBAL THE CANNIBAL MOVIES — THAT OUGHT TO COUNT FOR SOMETHING."



there are no longer any such ideals as courage and character. There is no absolute truth. We make it up as we go along, film by film. You're joking, right?"

When the Hollywood mogul stopped laughing, he agreed with the studio owner and suggested that the chaplain be excused from the meeting. "Here, here!" the others enjoined, and the chaplain was sent on his way.

"Now, let's get serious," said the mogul. "We've got to figure out how to reassert control before this wacko Gibson — or anyone else — does anything like this again. My friends, we're in a war for the soul of America."

On that last point, all were in agreement.

Most Americans may know Rosie O'Donnell as a comedienne, but there's nothing remotely funny about her tirade against President Bush and her crusade for gay marriage. Just two days after the president called for a constitutional amendment to defend marriage as a union of a man and a woman, O'Donnell and her lesbian partner were "married" in San Francisco.

The day started with O'Donnell's appearance on ABC's *Good Morning America* morning show. Launching into a verbal assault, she said the president's Feb. 24 announcement represented "the most vile and hateful words ever spoken by a sitting president." Furthermore, O'Donnell said she "would like to tell Laura Bush and her husband I find the proposed amendment very, very, very, very shocking and immoral."

According to Fox News, O'Donnell and her partner Kelli Carpenter were married immediately after the couple flew from New York to San Francisco. The two were ushered into a private entrance at San Francisco's City Hall, granted their illegal license and then were "married" in a private civil ceremony. City

GUEST OPINION:



Turning morality on its head

By R. Albert Mohler, president
Southern Seminary — Louisville, Ky.

treasurer Susan Leal, described by Fox News as "one of the city's most prominent elected lesbians," conducted the ceremony.

As the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus sang *We Shall Overcome* and *Going to the Chapel*, the couple emerged from the palatial city hall. "We really did. We got married," O'Donnell said. According to the *Toronto Star*, the building was filled with those wanting "to catch a glimpse of the most famous couple to be married there thus far."

The dishonesty of O'Donnell's attacks on Bush and the proposed marriage amendment is immediately evident when Bush's words are compared to former President Bill Clinton's statements as he signed the *Defense of Marriage*

Act into law in 1996. "I have long opposed governmental recognition of same-gender marriages," Clinton said — but Clinton, who supported the homosexual rights movement in other respects, was spared O'Donnell's ire.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of O'Donnell's attack on President Bush was her statement that his call for a constitutional amendment in defense of marriage was "immoral." Her use of that word is most interesting and worthy of attention, for it reveals the rhetorical strategy of the homosexual activists and the inverted morality that now shapes their worldview.

Throughout human history, across generations and across cultures, homosexuality has been considered a perversion of

sexuality and immoral. Societies that had sanctioned some form of homosexuality — like the pederasty practiced by the ancient Greek elites — were understood to be morally corrupt and compromised, but now Rosie and company intend to put morality on its head. Now, homosexual behaviors are not to be considered immoral. Instead, any opposition to the normalization and celebration of homosexuality is "immoral." Left has become right, and right has become left, you see.

Rhetoric is a weapon of political warfare as well as a means of communication. Rosie knew exactly what she was doing, and she performed well. She posed as the new Mother Superior of postmodern morality, standing the Judeo-Christian tradition on its head and describing the moral convictions held by the vast majority of human beings as "vile and hateful."

She's really counting on Americans to get over the shock of homosexual marriage. Where's the outrage?

Adapted by Baptist Press from Mohler's weblog on www.crosswalk.com.

Scroll's discovery of 'utmost importance'

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — While excavating a burial tomb near Jerusalem in 1979, Gabriel Barkay uncovered the oldest known copy of Old Testament scripture. The priestly blessing, recorded in Numbers 6:24-26, was discovered on two small silver scrolls dated to the 7th century B.C.

"This was a discovery of utmost importance," said Barkay, professor of archaeology at Bar Ilan University near Tel Aviv. "These verses pre-date the famous Dead Sea Scrolls by approximately four centuries. They are the only biblical verses we have from the time of the First Temple [period]."

Barkay spoke of the discovery at New Orleans Seminary (NOBS) on Feb. 18, one of only two lectures during a trip to America. His was the inaugural lecture offered the seminary's new Center for Archaeological Research.

Steven Ortiz, assistant professor of archaeology and biblical studies and director of the Center for Archaeological Research at NOBS, served as field archaeologist at the Ketef Hinnom site where the scrolls were found. When Ortiz heard that Barkay was coming to America to lecture at Emory University, he convinced his archaeology mentor to come to New Orleans to speak as well.

Asking Barkay to deliver the center's first lecture was an easy decision, Ortiz said. "He is an excellent and

engaging lecturer. I wanted our students to be exposed to one of the top scholars in the field of biblical archaeology. "The importance of the Ketef Hinnom inscriptions tends to be overlooked among students and pastors," Ortiz said. "These scrolls are significant for the dating of the Old Testament. They provide evidence of the antiquity of the Bible."



SCROLL FIND — Gabriel Barkay (in silhouette) shows a picture of how one of the silver scrolls looked shortly after it was removed from the tomb at Ketef Hinnom. (BP photo by Gary D. Myers)

The two silver scrolls were discovered by Barkay's team in a rock-hewn burial cave southwest of the ancient city of

Jerusalem. The structure of the tomb was of interest to Barkay because it dated to the First Temple period, but it appeared that over centuries looters had taken all the artifacts. The tomb had last been used for storing Turkish army rifles during the Ottoman period. However, Barkay and his team discovered that some artifacts had been preserved in a bone repository in the tomb. When a family member died, he or she was placed on a burial bench in the tomb along with personal items such as vases and jewelry, Barkay explained. After the dead body decayed, the bones were collected and placed in a bone repository located in a separate area of the tomb. The practice is referred to in the Old Testament as being "gathered unto his fathers."

At some point a layer of the repository's ceiling broke loose and covered the collected bones and personal items. Barkay said that the piece of ceiling appeared to be nothing more than the repository floor. An Israeli schoolboy helping clean the repository during excavations accidentally broke through the layer, revealing many bones and artifacts below.

As the team sifted through the items in repository, they discovered the two scrolls. After the initial discovery in 1979, scholars had the daunting task of unrolling and deciphering the text. They had no idea how important the find would be.

"It took us three years to unroll," Barkay said. "When unrolled, it was covered with very delicately scratched characters. The first word we could decipher was the 'YHWH'—sometimes anglicized as 'Jehovah.' This is the name of

the Lord in the Hebrew Bible." Until this time no inscriptions with the name of God had been found in Jerusalem.

The larger of the two scrolls was only about three inches long when it was unrolled. The smaller one was just over two inches long. Barkay said the thin fragile silver of each scroll was etched with 19 lines of tiny, Hebrew script. It was years before researchers realized that the inscription was an almost exact representation of the priestly blessing found in Numbers.

Careful study revealed that the Hebrew characters used were distinctive of the 7th century B.C.

In English the verses read: "The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace."

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Students disqualified

WASHINGTON (BP)—A state can single out a ministerial student for disqualification from its college scholarship program, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled Feb. 25 in an opinion critics described as inconsistent with its recent decisions. In a 7-2 opinion, the high court upheld the state of Washington's prohibition of Joshua Davey from a scholarship program for high-achieving, low-income students because he chose to major in pastoral ministries. The justices agreed with the state's argument that it had the authority under its constitution to refuse aid for such a student in order to protect the religious consciences of its citizens. The court majority rejected Davey's argument the program is "not facially neutral with respect to religion" under a 1993 decision in which the justices ruled against the city of Hialeah, Fla., which outlawed animal sacrifices like those practiced by the Santeria religion. In Davey's case, "the state's disfavor of religion (if it can be called that) is of a far milder kind," Rehnquist wrote. "It imposes neither criminal nor civil sanctions on any type of religious service or rite. It does not deny to ministers the right to participate in the political affairs of the community. And it does not require students to choose between their religious beliefs and receiving a government benefit. The state has merely chosen not to fund a distinct category of instruction. Training someone to lead a congregation is an essentially religious endeavor," Rehnquist said. "Indeed, majoring in devotional theology is akin to a religious calling as well as an academic pursuit." Associate Justice Antonin Scalia, joined only by Clarence Thomas, dissented, saying Washington's program "facially discriminates against religion. When the state makes a public benefit generally available, that benefit becomes part of the baseline against which burdens on religion are measured; and when the state withholds that benefit from some individuals solely on the basis of religion, it violates the free exercise clause no less than if it had imposed a special tax." Davey, now a graduate of Northwest College, is a first-year student at Harvard Law School.

Looking back

10 years ago

In response to increased calls from churches in regions where gambling has been legalized, Southern Baptist ministers gather in Atlanta for a "think tank" to formulate a strategy for training and awareness of legalized gambling for churches across the convention.

20 years ago

During "Christival: A Festival of Hope" at Mississippi State University (MSU) in Starkville, 39 people accept Jesus as Savior and more than 200 rededicated their lives to Him. The event was sponsored by the MSU Baptist Student Union, Campus Crusade for Christ, and Navigators.

30 years ago

According to J. N. Barnette of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, "We are calling upon the churches to join in a great, united effort now to locate and enroll thousands and tens of thousands of babies in the Sunday School through the cradle roll. Here is a ready opportunity to complete our job of enrolling a million more in '54."

GAY MARRIAGE?

Permissiveness related to homosexuality is, from a historical standpoint, one of the indicators of deep moral decline. For the student of the Bible, the example of Sodom and Gomorrah immediately comes to mind. Yet, the same issues of decay can be found in the latter stages of many other great cities, countries, or civilizations. When the banner of homosexual promiscuity begins to wave over a people, Humpty-Dumpty has fallen!

What does the Bible say about homosexuality? Plainly and unmistakably it teaches to avoid such lifestyle and practice. Not long ago, I heard an advocate of the homosexual lifestyle explaining that what the Bible means there is, "Do not enter into that kind of relationship without sincere love." The only problem with that interpretation is that the Bible never says anything like that!

Now, what does the Bible say about gay marriages? Well, in fact, it says nothing. It has prohibitions against homosexual relationships which, if that be true, there could never be a continuing relationship called gay, or homosexual, or lesbian marriage. Marriage is an institution ordained by God between a man and a woman. It was created, implemented, and blessed by God Almighty. It was not an ingenious thought of man. It was not an institute of the state. It is a relationship given to us by God and does not exist apart from the author and has no meaning outside the boundaries in which it was designed.

While the homosexual community would like to continue developing a theme that this is nothing more than another sexual form that fits their personal preference and that marriage is a normal extension of that relationship — such is not the case! It is abnormal, unscriptural, unnatural behavior, and outside the bounds of God's plan.

We have heard so much about it and read and talked about it so much that we use the term "Gay

Marriage" as though it is an accepted reality. Twenty years ago, possibly even ten years ago, no one would have ever thought such a thing, much less have become accus-

tomed to it being a part of our society. Yet, the truth is that it is still so strange when you think about a person wanting to have a relationship like that! What if someone went to get their marriage license in order to marry their loving and long-time companion — a German Shepherd? Now, we would think that weird, for it certainly is! And then, what if some lady fell in love with her Persian cat and wanted to consummate their relationship that would have social and economic benefits and call it marriage? If you think that is ludicrous, you are thinking like folks thought just a few years ago about gay marriage!

In the last week in February, 2004, President George W. Bush made a proposal that the Congress pass and the states ratify the Constitutional Amendment that defines marriage as "a union between a man and a woman." I agree with the principle that is being proposed, but I also think that it is important to keep in mind that whether or not the Congress, or states, or anybody else ratifies this amendment, it does not change Biblical truth! God designed marriage, implemented it for the good of a husband and wife, and gives guidance for its clear protection so that with or without a Constitutional Amendment those things will remain unchanged.



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

There is no statute on the books that says that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior of the world — but He is! Even if the Supreme Court of the United States were to vote 9 to 0 that He is not, or that God does not exist, or that Heaven or Hell are not real, it would make no difference whatever as to the reality!

As with most of the prohibitions in Scripture, this one is not just given in an effort to keep people from entering into a meaningful relationship or from having enjoyment in life. No, God knows that it is potentially harmful to the individuals who pursue the practice. I have known and have talked with people who say, "Do you think I chose to be this way?" Others go so far as to say that God made them the way they are and imply that it is not a choice.

Of course, the homosexual lifestyle is a choice. It is a choice you can avoid. Look at it this way. What if a man is married and has several affairs going on on the side and is open to any one-night-stand that comes along and is free and promiscuous in his sexual life? What if he says, "Do you think I choose to be this way? No, God made me the way that I am with the appetites that I have!" Therefore, he pursues multiple relationships. Is it a choice? Absolutely! He could choose to be faithful to his wife. He could choose to

reject the temptations and appeals that come, but instead he chooses to do what he chooses to do.

I certainly understand that the road to homosexuality is not one simple path-way and that there are so many complicating factors that enter into a person's development. Sometimes they get involved in the wrong relationships because of experimentation or being preyed upon by someone who takes advantage of them. Oftentimes, it is simply because of the fascination in their mind. Long before there is ever a connection with the person, there is the playground of sinful thoughts. The more they pursue those thoughts, the more normal the activity seems to be until finally they engage in the activity and become possessed by the sin. I know it happens in virtually every other area of fleshly pursuits, but this one, like others, can be avoided by the grace of God.

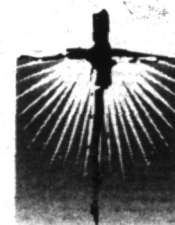
So, what can be done? What would be a Christian response to the tragedy of homosexuality that seems to be engulfing our nation? Let me list a few:

1. **Intentionally and earnestly pray!** Pray for those who are involved in that lifestyle. Pray for those who would be attracted to it. Pray for the parents whose children have been entrapped in it. Pray for churches that have been hurt by it. **Pray!**

2. **Stay with the Biblical teaching!** I have read and listened over the years as this topic has moved in every direction of discussion from sociological influences, to biological genetic prints, and to emotional pulls that drag people into it. You will never go wrong by staying right and staying right is anchored to the Word of God. Jesus is the answer!

Jesus is the answer for all of our troubled sin needs and we need to stay focused on Him, not just the problem!

Jesus can meet the need of the alcoholic, the atheist, and the angry soul. He brings freedom to the person in bondage to addiction or affliction. He can cure our sins and our sicknesses, our sorrows, and our sourness. God, through Jesus Christ His Son, has an answer for the precious soul that has gotten lost in the weird web that appears to be love but is only defiant behavior.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

RESOLUTION

We, as members of New Home Baptist Church of Smith County, Mississippi, do hereby resolve by the authority of God's Holy Word, that we without any reservation oppose the concept of legal marriage between persons of the same sex.

We furthermore resolve to aid financially any legitimate Southern Baptist effort relevant to this issue.

We furthermore resolve to proclaim our opposition publicly and politically by publishing this Resolution in The Baptist Record, and by sending copies to Senator Thad Cochran, Senator Trent Lott; Representative Chip Pickering; Senator Billy Thames, and Representative Bo Eaton.

This resolution was submitted and approved by New Home Baptist Church of Smith County, Mississippi on December 3, 2003.

Rev. Ron Swindall, Pastor
Cary D. Stringer, Clerk

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What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

March 4, 2004

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

2004 Preaching & Worship Conference

Featured Presenters:
Ken Hemphill & Blake Scafidel

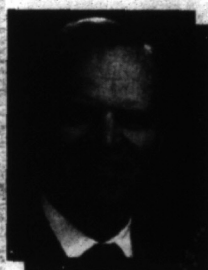
Trinity Baptist Church
Southaven
Monday, April 26

First Baptist Church
Brookhaven
Tuesday, April 27

Preaching from the New Testament

Featured Presenters

Ken Hemphill



Ken Hemphill is National Strategist for Empowering Kingdom Growth of the Southern Baptist Convention. He is author of Revitalizing the Sunday Morning Dinosaur, The Antioch Effect, The Bonsai Theory of Church Growth and numerous others. A frequent contributor to articles and chapters in collections of other religious resources, he is also a nationally known lecturer.

Blake Scafidel



Blake Scafidel has been in full-time music ministry for 15 years and is currently serving as the minister of music and youth at FBC, Bude. He and his wife Carrene have been married 14 years. They have three children, and one dog.

REGISTRATION FORM

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Pastor/Leadership Development Dept., MBCB,

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or E-mail information to: kmcdonnell@mbcb.org by April 23, so that we might prepare materials.

Call 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651, ext. 305, for more information.

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Gladness &
Singleness of
Heart"

(Acts 2: 46 KJV)

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mitzie1712@aol.com

Delta Hills
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Coffeehouse
Friday, April 30
Immanuel BC
Greenville
Straight X Building
6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

MUSIC: Stacy Andrews,
minister of
College & 20 Somethings
Ridgecrest BC, Madison

HUMOROUS SPEAKER:
Gary Jackson, pastor &
"CW" on WFCA Radio
French Camp

Cost: \$5 payable at the door,
includes coffee, desserts and
child care

For information contact Jamie
at 662-335-3294

SuperSummer

MISSISSIPPI
July 12-16, 2004

featuring

What is Super Summer?



Fred D. Lynch
Worship Leader



Chris Davis
Music Leader

Super Summer is:

- twenty hours of discipleship / evangelism training
- a week of challenge for students to learn how to "penetrate their culture"
- creative, interactive and incredible
- a "don't miss" opportunity
- leadership ... envisioning how your choices and actions today may influence you tomorrow

Guidelines for all students

1. Demonstrates leadership qualities and is a growing Christian.
2. Faithful involvement in worship, Sunday School, and Wednesday night youth activities.
3. Complete at least one level of a discipleship study (i.e. DiscipleGroup, DiscipleNow...).
4. Memorized a minimum of 10 scripture verses relating to discipleship, evangelism, or a disciple study.
5. Share their personal testimony with the youth group.
6. Share the Gospel with at least one person this year.
7. Completed at least the 8th grade in 2004, but not yet in college.
8. Agree to attend all SS sessions.
9. Journal how you are growing in your walk with Christ (i.e. prayer, scripture memorization, struggles, joys, etc.).
10. First year students: you must be involved in a "small group" study or accountability group prior to Super Summer.
11. Second year students: express in 100 words or less your level of commitment to Christ and how you are involved in leadership in your church and community. Please give to your youth minister.

If you have any questions about these guidelines, please give us a call and we will try to help you in any way that we can. Super Summer is an incredible experience and we want to do all we can to keep that standard high. These guidelines help in many ways. Thanks for your attention to the details of these guidelines.

TO REQUEST A REGISTRATION PACKET

Call us at 1-800-748-1651, ext.283, or E-mail us at redwards@mbcb.org

Church Facilities

Furnishings Workshop

March 23, 2004

8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Broadmoor Baptist Church
1531 Highland Colony
Parkway
Madison, Mississippi

The conference is for pastors, staff members, building committees, long-range planning committees, business administrators and maintenance property personnel.

For more info, contact Keith Gordon or Kay McDonnell, Church Building Services (PLD Dept.), PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205-0530. Phone: 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3305 in Jackson. Fax number: 601-714-7426. E-mail: kmcdonnell@mbcb.org

BIBLE DRILL CAMP

August 5-7, 2004

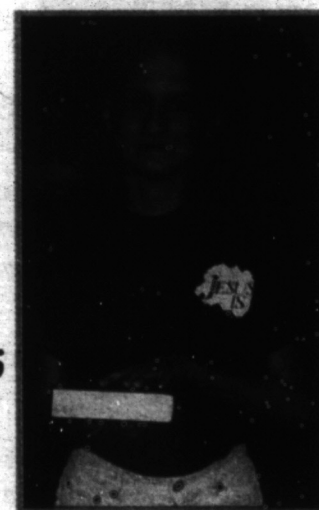
Central Hills Baptist Retreat

For: All children who have completed grades 3-6 (Bible Drill Camp is open to any church group whether they have Bible Drill at their church or not.)

Cost: \$90 • Registration: 1:30 p.m., Thursday, August 5



For more information about the camp program contact Don Hicks, camp pastor, at 601-292-3287 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651, or by E-mail at dhicks@mbcb.org. For information about reservations or the retreat center contact Jim Ray, retreat manager, at 662-289-9730 or by E-mail at jray@mbcb.org.



Camp Activities include:

Bible study
Scripture memorization
Bible Drill skills
Worship
Time with missionaries
Flag ceremonies
Swimming
Canoeing
Horseback riding
Rifle range (safety and marksmanship)

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OUTREACH TEAMS THAT WIN



MONDAY	TUESDAY
April 19, 2004	April 20, 2004
6:30-8:30 p.m.	6:30-8:30 p.m.
Poplar Springs Drive BC	FBC

Outreach Teams That Win: G.R.O.W.

"G.R.O.W." is based on Dr. Tidwell's phenomenally successful outreach approach. Under this proven-effective plan church members are asked to commit just one evening each month to outreach... with several different avenues from which they can choose. You will not want to miss this opportunity!



No preregistration required
No cost for the conference
No child care provided

LifeWay Bookstore materials
will be available for purchase.

Protecting the Church and the Privacy of Church Members



The Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention cordially invites pastors, staff, and concerned laypeople to this seminar on March 30, 2004, 10 a.m.-noon.

Attorney and minister Jeff Rimes of Wells, Marble, and Hurst law firm will be leading the seminar. Jeff also is president of a non-profit legal consulting group called "Rendering Ministries" that offers its services to churches at free or reduced charges.

The seminar will focus on the effect privacy laws such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (H.I.P.A.A.) will have on churches and how churches can avoid lawsuits related to the privacy of their members.

The seminar will begin at 10 a.m. in the chapel of the Baptist Building and will end at noon.

Contact Rita Wood at rwood@mbcb.org or 1-800-748-1651 (toll free in Miss.) or 601-292-3329 by Friday, March 19, if you plan to attend.

The Many Hats We Wear

2004 Mississippi Baptist Ministry Assistants Conference



April 19-20
Camp Garaywa, Clinton
Speaker: Johnnie Haines
Music & Worship: Lisa Leavell

For more info, contact Kay McDonnell, Pastor/Leadership Development, at 601-292-3305 at 1-800-748-1651, or E-mail: kmcdonnell@mbcb.org.

Pray this day for...

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

March 5 - 18, 2004

PRAYER CHANGES THINGS

"God has ordained that the power to change things, to restrain evil, to calm human hatred, and to heal the world's wounds, is released by the prayer of His people."

Wesley L. Duewel

For: (1) Season of Prayer for North American Missions & Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (WMU Emphasis); (2) Pray for the farmers in rural Haiti as they begin to prepare their fields for the next rainy season. Pray for a spiritual hunger and a desire for change that will lead them to the one who gives living water.

As the University of The Philippines school year is closing in March, please pray that those who have received Jesus Christ this year will continue to grow in faith and remain strong even during the summer when they do not have the support of the fellowship of other believers.

Join in prayer for missionaries Jack and Julia Wiley and their two small sons as they move from the interior city where they spent their first term of service to Brasilia, capital of Brazil. Ask God to bless them as they begin their ministries among the thousands who are arriving weekly to live in the 25 satellite cities surrounding the capital.

Pray for an exiled Kurdish believer trying to return to northern Iraq to begin his ministry. Turkish authorities have caused setbacks. He cannot enter from neighboring countries because he was imprisoned and tortured there for his faith. Pray for his family whom he will be leaving behind temporarily.

For: (1) Area 6 F.O.C.U.S. Groups, TBA (WMU); (2) A Christian family will be strategically moving to a new town in the Horn of Africa. Pray that the Lord will help the family bond with this new small community and make them salt and light among the Somali people.

Kirk and Laura Boes are church planters in Whistler, British Columbia. Pray for housing, support, and additional workers. Whistler will be the site for the Winter Olympic Games in 2010. Pray for the 4 million people who visit Whistler every year.

The Ecuador Deaf team asks that you pray for L. (hearing). She is one of the leaders of the Deaf church in Cuenca, Ecuador. She has just agreed to take on the responsibility of the prayer coordinator for the Deaf of Ecuador. Pray for wisdom as L. deals with many problems that the deaf have.

Pray for a group of workers who are currently studying the world view of Muslims so they can understand how to best present the gospel message to the 2.3 billion Muslims in the world. Ask God to open their minds, hearts and spirits to grasp and understand everything He wants them to know through their study. Pray for their teachers to be guided in what they teach.

All the windows are shut and curtains pulled, the doors are locked, and only those invited are inside the house in Central Yemen. The Christian ceremony must be quiet, and no one outside must know that two local believers are being married. Pray for this Arab couple as they begin their life together with Christ in the center of their marriage.

For: (1) Campers On Mission Fellowship, Waynesboro, 7 p.m., 18th - 9:30 a.m., 21st (MM); (2) Pray for all the associational missions directors & their assistants throughout Mississippi. They encourage the pastors and churches so much.

For: (1) Youth Music Festival, Oakdale BC, Brandon, 5th - 6th (CM); (2) Mississippi Acteens Convention, William Carey College, Hattiesburg, 5th - 7th (WMU); (3) Mission Service Corp Area Coordinator, Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Past Christian, 5th - 7th (MM).

For: (1) Missions Mobilization Celebration, TBA, 5:30 p.m., 12th - noon, 13th (MMOB); (2) Pray for God to call out the lay-leaders He desires to attend training classes in Central Zimbabwe this year, in order to help them become better church leaders. Pray for the Holy Spirit to be their teacher.

For: (1) Christian Education Clinic, FBC, Jackson (D&FM); (2) Michael Cook, Rocky Face, Ga., is a church planter missionary-pastor. Pray as he leads a church start there. Pray for God's hand to be on church leaders, and for God's Spirit to move in the community so that many unbelievers will become committed followers of Jesus.

For: (1) Mississippi Specialized Workers Training (invitation only), Camp Garaywa, Clinton (WMU); (2) Pray for those planning short-term trips to the Kham areas of Tibet, China, this summer. Ask that God would prepare their hearts for service and also soften the hearts of Kham people to receive the gospel gladly.



Join us for our historical **HOUSE TOPS** event on **March 13, 2004**.

Need a Ride?

For more information, contact the Prayer Ministry Office at 601-292-3304 or visit our website at www.mississippi-prayerline.org.

1-89 MR. BRYAN K. HOLYFIELD
Parents: Michael & Patricia
Church Planting: Central & Eastern Europe

10-83 MISS KIMBERLY J. HEARON
Parents: Thomas & Bonnie
Student Evangelism: Western Europe

11-92 MR. ANDREW S. BRASWELL
Parents: Larry & Alicia
General Evangelism: Eastern South America

16-96 MR. MICAH J. PEACOCK
Parents: Kevin & Brenda
Theological Education: Middle America

20-88 MR. JOHN R. MCCALL
Parents: Dennis & Margaret
Agriculture: Eastern Africa

24-91 MISS LAURA M. PURL
Parents: John & Amy
Business Management: West Africa

For security, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to:

Child's name and parent's name
MBCB
Stewardship Dept.
PO Box 530
Jackson MS 39205

PLEASE NOTE
Church members may send a package of cards altogether; cards do not have to be sent individually to Stewardship.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Lemonis
Daywind Music Publishing has announced the addition of John Lemonis to its roster of writers. Lemonis attended Calvary Church, Greenville, as a youth. He served at Gamari Road Church, Greenville, Arcola Church, Arcola, and Macedonia Church, Brookhaven. Lemonis' new recording is entitled The Power and The Grace.

First Church, Waveland, exceeded the goal of \$700 for Lottie Moon. The total given was \$885.

Moorhead, Moorhead: Revival Mar. 7-10; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Randall Creel, evangelist; Robert Haney, music; Larry W. Haggard, pastor.

Mount Olive, Smithdale: Revival Mar. 14-17; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Argile Smith, NOBTS, guest preacher; Steve Bishop, music; Joey Barnard, pastor.

The Mississippi College Department of Art presents the annual Senior Exhibit II, A Road Less Traveled, in Gore Gallery, Aven Fine Arts Building, featuring multi-



Ingram, pastor, Williams, & O. Bryan

media work. The opening reception will be held March 28 from 2-4 p.m. The show runs March 28-April 18. The public is welcome. Gallery

hours are Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Admission is free.

The Clarke County Baptist Association goal for Lottie Moon offering was \$55,000. From December 1-February 19 a total of \$56,465.27 was given, not including \$1,203 not yet sent to the association. The total gifts to Lottie Moon in the past 25 seasons are \$1,001,807.68. Grady Crowell is the AMD.

Calvary Church, New Augusta, will hold the Turner Memorial Day service March 14. Bring a covered dish. A praise service will follow lunch. Steven Lloyd is pastor.

Duck Hill Church, Duck Hill, will present Spring Cleansing, a women's conference, March 6. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. The cost is \$15. Page Hughes will be the guest speaker. Music, lunch, and door prizes will be provided. For more information, call (662) 565-2502, (662) 565-2302, or (662) 565-2963.

Chunky Church, Chunky, will hold a 20th year celebration for Wayne Campbell, pas-

tor, March 14. Services begin at 11 a.m. Lunch will follow.



Bass, pastor, and Tyre

Ruben Williams was recently licensed to the ministry by McCarley Church, McCarley. Pictured (from left) are Rupert Ingram, pastor, Williams, and David O'Bryan.



Dowdy, Anderson, and Morgan

Old Oak Grove, Myrtle: Revival Mar. 7-10; Sunday, 11 a.m., noon meal; 7 p.m. nightly; Wed., supper at 5:30 p.m.; Ed Newton, Doug Rakestraw,

Johnny Rakestraw, Bruce Crockett, Seth Kirkland, guest speakers; Gary Linville, pastor.

First Church, Calhoun City, called David C. Tuten as pastor effective February 15. Tuten comes from New Salem Church, New Site, Ala. He attended Carson-Newman College and Southwestern Seminary.

West Corinth* Church, Corinth, called Harold G. King as pastor. He was elected February 22. King and his family come from Selmer, Tenn.

Cairo Church, Ecu, recently added two deacons to the deacon body. Sam Anderson was ordained January 18 and David Morgan was put on the active list. Pictured (from left) are Bill Dowdy, Anderson, and Morgan.

Locust Hill Church, Pontotoc County, has called Matt Tyre as minister of music. Pictured (from left) are Tyre and Tim Bass, pastor.

Jericho, Guntown: Revival Mar. 8-12; 7 p.m. nightly with special music; Andy Russell, evangelist; Billy Joe DeVaughn, music; Marvin Robbins, pastor.

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Senatobia, Mississippi 38668
Telephone (662) 562-8503

Join Us At The Fair!

Will you be considering furthering your education at one of Mississippi's three outstanding Baptist Colleges, join us at the North Mississippi Baptist College Fair on Thursday, March 4, at East Heights Baptist Church, or at the sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Commission.

North Mississippi Baptist College
Thursday, March 4, 2004
East Heights Baptist Church
Tupelo, MS
Time: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Blue Mountain College
Founded 1857
1-800-335-0735
www.bmc.edu

Mississippi College
1-800-736-1236
www.misscol.edu

William Carey College
1-800-955-0975
www.wcc.edu

A \$1,000 scholarship to any one of the three colleges will be given away at the end of the fair.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Demonstrating Spiritual Leadership

Judges 4:4-10, 14-16; 5:1-2, 6-9

By Pasty Foster

It was a common theme of the old Westerns. A powerful villain would lawlessly rule a frontier town, bullying the townspeople into complete submission. No one dared to oppose him or his cruel sidekicks. Then a brave cowboy would ride into town and single handedly inspire everyone by his courageous deeds. By the end of the movie, the townspeople would crowd into the streets, ready to rid their town of its evil master and his associates. The brave cowboy had encouraged a whole town to stand up and face their enemy.

Israel needed such a leader. Sold into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, they were mightily oppressed for twenty years by Sisera, captain of Jabin's army. In desperate

need of deliverance, they cried out to God. God spoke the plan for their deliverance to Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, who judged Israel at that time.

Deborah sent for Barak, the man God had chosen to lead Israel into battle, and instructed him to go toward Mount Tabor with ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and Zebulon. She told Barak that the Lord would draw Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, to the river Kishon, that flowed at the foot of the mount, where God promised to deliver Sisera into Barak's hands. Surely all of Israel would enjoy the moment when Sisera was captured and no longer able to wield his



Foster

power against them. Though God promised the victory, Barak lacked the courage to go into battle without Deborah. In Judges 4:8, he tells her, "If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, then I will not go."

Deborah agreed to go, but warned Barak that he would not have the honor of capturing Sisera, that the Lord would sell Sisera into the hands of a woman.

Nevertheless, Deborah not only stood with Barak after he had made his choice, but she went with him. She trusted God and knew that victory would come only as they followed the Lord into battle. Deborah stood with Barak and his small army on Mount Tabor as they watched the gathering below of Sisera's huge army with its nine hundred chariots of iron. Without Deborah's encouraging presence, Barak's heart

could easily have melted with fear. In Judges 4:14, she encouraged him to be up, "for this is the day in which the Lord has delivered Sisera into your hand. Has not the Lord gone out before you?"

What better encouragement to offer someone than to tell them that the Lord is with them, that He has gone out before them, that He is leading the way! As a true godly leader, Deborah did not call attention to herself, but rather pointed Barak to the true source of Israel's deliverance — God, Himself. Because of Deborah's encouragement and brave leadership, Barak went into battle. The New King James says, "And the Lord routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled away on foot" (Judges 4:15). God brought the victory, just as he promised, but Barak missed the satisfaction and honor of capturing Sisera. Jael, wife of Heber the Kenite,

hammered a nail through Sisera's temple into the ground as he slept in her tent. Israel was free at last.

Deliverance always brings celebration. Chapter 5 rings with praises to the Mighty God of Israel as Deborah and Barak rehearse the things the Lord has done in the previous chapter.

The final verse of the focal passage says, "My heart is toward the governors (leaders) of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless the Lord." Deborah, wife of Lapidoth and judge of Israel, willingly and courageously offered herself as a spiritual leader, and as a result, inspired the small army of Israel to go out against the host of the enemy and defeat them.

May God grant us a willing spirit to courageously offer ourselves as examples of spiritual leadership, that we may inspire others to stand fast in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Foster is a member of Murphy Creek Church, Louisville.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Evangelism

I Timothy 1:2-17

By Bobby McKay

A young preacher just out of seminary was determined that the church he was serving in would grow leaps and bounds in a matter of a few days. He decided that he would find a Billy Graham sermon and memorize it word for word. The Sunday came when he was to deliver "his" sermon. The people were amazed at how brilliantly he preached, and he himself knew that he was doing a good job of delivery. The problem came at the end of the message as he began the invitation. He looked out in the crowd of 50 or so people and said, "Now as we sing the old hymn Just As I Am I invite thousands and thousands of you to come a make decisions for Christ this morning."

The lesson this week is largely about the subject of evangelism, but look carefully and notice that Paul discusses false doctrine, his own testimony, and the wonderful privilege we have as Christians to spend time with the Lord in prayer.

I. WATCH OUT! (1:3-7)

One thing we can admire about Paul is that he never leaves you guessing on what he was led to write or say. I remember when I was a senior in high school and went to visit Blue Mountain College. I was excited, nervous, and overwhelmed at what it meant to commit my life to God in a Christian vocation. As part of the interview process I had to meet



McKay

with James Travis. I had never met the man before that day but I'll tell you this, I'll never forget him. He came into his office and told me straight out, "Son, if you want religion you can go somewhere else, but if you want the Bible, you come to Blue Mountain College." At that moment, Blue Mountain was the only college for me.

Paul is saying here to Timothy and to us, "Watch out!" You know as well as I do, that false teachings are on the rise in our world. False teachers can be easily found with the turn of the radio dial, the click of the remote, or a surfing online. The tragedy is that many times the false teachings are done in the name of religion. My friends, we don't need anymore religion in this country, we need Jesus. I have heard people say that Jesus came to start Christianity. This is not

entirely true. Jesus came to save sinners, and I rejoice that He has saved me. I urge you, my brothers and sisters, to watch out. There are a lot of so-called preachers out there today who are being used more by the devil than they are the Lord. Measure every preacher and every sermon with the Bible. It should be our prayer that we don't crave religion, but rather we thirst for His perfect Word.

II. WHAT A SAVIOR! (1:12-15)

This is where I want you to see that while Paul is largely known as missionary and church planter, he also has the heart of an evangelist. In these four verses we discover the wonderful testimony of Paul. These verses are all about Jesus, the grace he demonstrated, and the marvelous power he has to save anyone. Hear the heart of Paul in these verses. He is not prideful and he is not boasting in anything that he was able to do. As a matter of fact verse 13 shows how truly depraved he was. Paul

knew that he served an awesome Savior and he wasn't about to let Timothy forget it. The message of Paul in this section could be summed up in these four words: Jesus, what a Savior!

Dear Sunday School teacher, are you teaching this same message?

III. WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER (2:1-7)

Not only did Paul just talk about evangelism in terms of his testimony, he expresses how incredibly vital prayer is in the life of a believer. It has been said many times that all great revivals have their beginnings with Gods people praying. There is a lot of truth in that statement. Prayer lists in every church should contain petitions and requests for people to be saved and revival to come. Evangelism is by no means a new concept, but it is the most exciting adventure a church can take part in.

McKay is pastor of Spring Hill Church, Waterford.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of events which take place in churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in the Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standard forms provided by the news paper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted.

Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or

black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST
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THE VILLAGE VIEW



Dr. Bill Causey, Interm Executive Director

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

DECEMBER 1 - 31, 2003 MEMORIALS

Juanita Kirby
Mr. Ted R. Bruton
Minnie Lee Kirchharr
The Jeff McClendon Family
Stephanie Edwards Knight
Ms. Karen E. Cooley
Mr. Billy Knotts
Mike & Suzanne Allen & Family
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Jack & Nancy Regan
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Mr. Rusty Bliss & Family
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Tinsley Baptist Church
Mrs. Bonnielyn Lightsey
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Mr. Edmund C. Lingle
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Mr. & Mrs. Truman Manning
Mr. & Mrs. Hamilton Pierce
Mr. & Mrs. Homer Willingham
Mrs. Dora Patterson
Wanda Little
Mr. & Mrs. E. C. Harris
Johanne S. Loper
Mr. & Mrs. Oliver H. Hopkins
Ms. Etelle L. Hopkins
Dot Lott
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Janie Lott
Mr. & Mrs. H. G. McCool
Mrs. Christine Smith
Mr. Richard Lott
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph S. Lyons

Annie Mae Norton Loyd
Mr. & Mrs. Clyde E. Lang
Faye Loyd
Ruth SSC, FBC-Tupelo
James Mabius
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Mrs. Jewel Malone
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Mary Kate, Thad & Jewel
Mr. Ralph Manning
Mr. & Mrs. Dan W. Southerland
William Edgar Marshall
Mr. & Mrs. S. S. Crocker
Loia Fay Marter
Mr. & Mrs. Charles L. Shelton
Truman Martin
Chestine, Henry & Modene Davis
Jack Mashburn
Linda & Tom Fenter
Mr. Martin Mathews
Mrs. Helen P. Daves
Frank Mayo
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Clark
Mrs. Ora Mae McAlpin
Mr. & Mrs. W. B. Smith
Mrs. Tom McAlpin
Mr. & Mrs. B. H. Williams
Mrs. Edna McDaniel (sister)
Mr. & Mrs. Dan Southerland
Mr. J. W. McDaniel (brother)
Mr. & Mrs. Dan Southerland
Mr. Jimmy McDaniel (brother)
Mr. & Mrs. Dan Southerland
Mr. & Mrs. O. J. McDaniel (parents)
Mr. & Mrs. Dan Southerland
Mr. R. W. McDaniel (brother)
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NCD, GDV OFGLLWV RSB
SD NOGVASDY
IACERWN, GDV AGSV RSB
SD G BGDYWF;
HWIGQNW ERWFV
OGN DC FCCB XCF
ERWB SD ERW SDD.
AQZW EOC: NWPWD

Clue: B = M

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Proverbs 30:5

President to push for marriage amendment

WASHINGTON (BP) — President George W. Bush announced his support for a constitutional marriage amendment on February 24, saying that "activist" judges and local officials threaten to change the "most fundamental institution of civilization."

In making his announcement in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Bush backed a version of an amendment that would protect the traditional definition of marriage by banning same-sex marriage but leave the issue of civil unions and domestic partnerships up to the states.

"An amendment to the Constitution is never to be undertaken lightly," Bush said. "The amendment process has addressed many serious matters of national concern. And the preservation of marriage rises to this level of national importance."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said that the so-called Federal Marriage Amendment, which has been introduced in Congress, "meets some of the principles" that Bush supports.

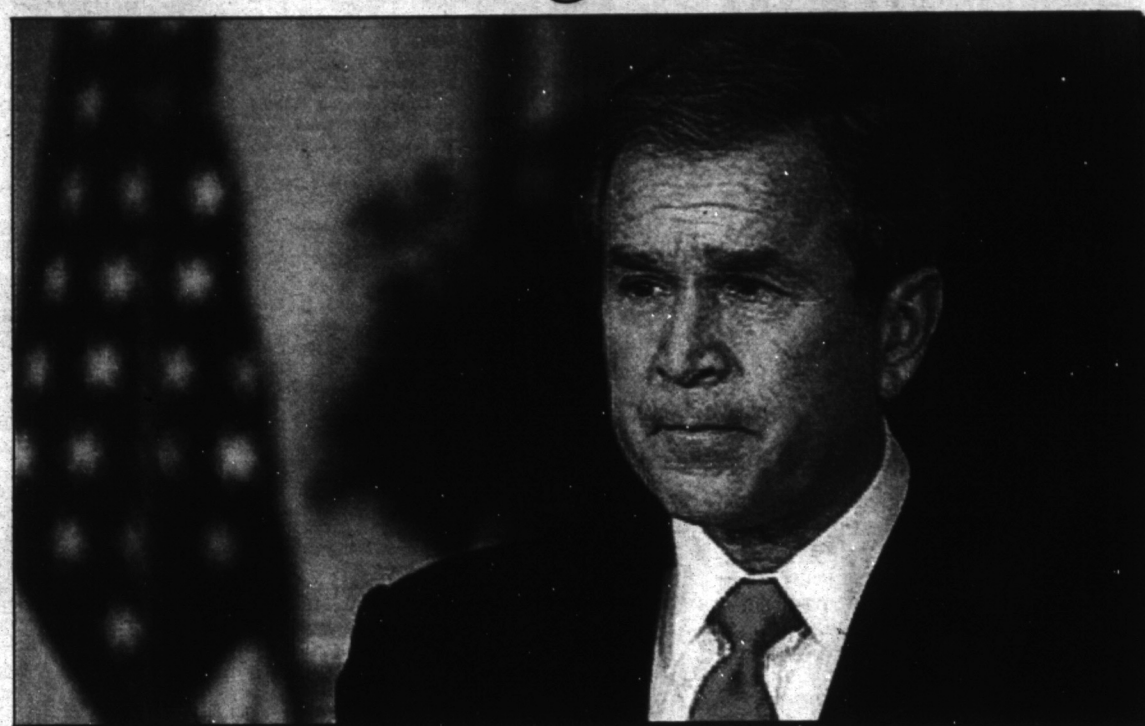
"We will be working with [congressional leaders] on specific language for an amendment," McClellan said.

The Federal Marriage Amendment has 113 supporters in the House and nine in the Senate, and has received the support of several pro-family organizations, including Focus on the Family, the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, and the Family Research Council.

"Today I call upon the Congress to promptly pass and to send to the states for ratification an amendment to our Constitution defining and protecting marriage as the union of a man and woman as husband and wife," Bush said. "The amendment should fully protect marriage while leaving the state legislatures free to make their own choices in defining legal arrangements other than marriage."

Democrats criticized the announcement. Democratic presidential frontrunner John Kerry said the amendment is a "wedge issue" and that he will vote against it if it reaches the Senate floor. Adding that he's against same-sex marriage but for civil unions, Kerry said that Bush is trying to divert attention from other issues.

In recent months social conservatives have been split on which version of an amendment to support. Some say that an amendment should ban civil unions, while others say that such an amendment, while desirable, is politically unfeasible. McClellan said that Bush "has made it very clear" that he opposed civil unions as governor of Texas.



PRO-MARRIAGE — President George W. Bush announces his support on February 24 for a marriage amendment to the U.S. Constitution, saying the "preservation of marriage rises to this level of national importance." (Photo courtesy of The White House)

An amendment must be approved by two-thirds of both the House and Senate and three-fourths of the states. Polls show that Americans oppose same-sex marriage by a 2-to-1 margin.

The president pointed to the landmark Massachusetts court decision, as well as actions by San Francisco city officials, as reasons he is supporting an amendment.

"Unless action is taken, we can expect more arbitrary court decisions, more litigation, more defiance of the law by local officials — all of which adds to uncertainty," he said. "After more than two centuries of American jurisprudence and millennia of human experience, a few judges and local authorities are presuming to change the most fundamental institution of civilization. Their actions have created confusion on an issue that requires clarity."

"On a matter of such importance, the voice of the people must be heard. Activist courts have left the people with one recourse. If we are to prevent the meaning of marriage from being changed forever, our nation must enact a constitutional amendment to protect marriage in America. Decisive and democratic action is needed, because attempts to redefine marriage in a single state or city could have serious consequences throughout the country."

Bush said the Defense of Marriage Act, passed in 1996 and signed by former President Clinton, is in danger of being overturned by courts. The act defines in federal law the definition of marriage and gives states the option of not recognizing another state's same-sex "marriage."

Bush said courts could overturn the act by saying it conflicts with the Constitution's full faith and credit clause, which says that "full faith and credit" must be given in each state to the "public acts, records, and judicial proceedings" of every other state.

"Those who want to change the meaning of marriage will claim that this provision requires all states and cities to recognize same-sex marriage performed anywhere in America," Bush said.

"Congress attempted to address this problem in the Defense of Marriage Act, by declaring that no state must accept another state's definition of marriage," he pointed out.

Pointing to the political support for the Defense of Marriage Act, Bush said the majority of people support the traditional definition of marriage. The act passed the House of Representatives 342-67 and the Senate 85-14. Kerry, the likely Democratic nominee for president, was one of those Senators voting against it.

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